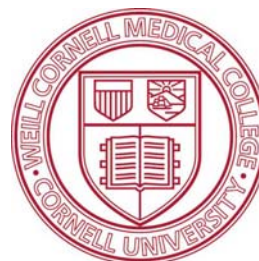


Tri-Institutional Training Program in Computational Biology & Medicine



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Admissions Related Questions

What makes a competitive applicant?

- There are no specific GPA or GRE requirements. We weigh all three components of the standard GRE exam (verbal, quantitative, analytical). We do not require GRE subject exams. Most successful applicants have GPAs in the range of 3.5 or greater.
- We look for applicants who have training (e.g., coursework) in both mathematics/computation and biology; however, such “dual” background is not a requirement.
- The research experience and future potential to become a scientist, as described in the application essay, is a very important part of the PhD application. Ideally (although not required), students should have a significant amount of research experience prior to applying to the program.
- Strong letters of recommendation from faculty who know the student’s research experience and potential. We like sentences that read “Ms. Jones is the best student I’ve had in my 25 years at XYZ University”.
- Publications are not required.

What are my chances of getting accepted into the program?

- Each year, we receive about 100 applications and interview 15-20 applicants. More than half of all of those who get interviewed receive an offer of admission. It is not possible to speculate on the chances of any particular applicant prior to the meeting of the CBM Admissions Committee.
- The CBM program enthusiastically considers students from any undergraduate institution, department, or degree program.

What is the application process?

- Students should go to the apply page on the CBM website: <http://www.triiprograms.org/cbm/apply.html>. Here you will find step-by-step instructions to apply for the CBM program through the application process of the Field of Computational Biology (which is affiliated with CBM) at Cornell University.
- The application fee can sometimes be waived in situations of financial difficulty. More information about this process is available upon request.

Can non-U.S. citizens apply?

- Yes. Furthermore, all students are fully funded, regardless of citizenship status.

Program-Related Questions

How long does it take to complete the CBM Program?

- It is estimated to take students ~5 years to finish the PhD program.

How is the CBM Program structured?

- Students begin the program in New York City with a six-week summer laboratory rotation with a CBM faculty member of their choice.
- The first academic year is split between Ithaca and New York City, taking classes and participating in 2 or 3 additional laboratory rotations in New York and/or Ithaca.
- The purpose of the laboratory rotations is to help students make a fully informed thesis-laboratory selection.
- In August of the second year, students choose a CBM thesis mentor (from any of the three institutions) and then spend the remainder of their CBM training years doing thesis research (computational and/or hybrid computational-experimental project) with that mentor.

Who are the Program faculty and what are their research interests?

- CBM Program faculty (approximately 40) are drawn from the 3 participating institutions (Cornell University, Weill Cornell Medical College, and Sloan-Kettering Institute) are listed at www.triiprograms.org/cbm/faculty.html.
- The Program faculty are interested in a wide range of concentration areas, including: Biophysics and Structural Biology; Genomics and Bioinformatics; Modeling and Systems Biology; Neuroscience; and Cancer Biology. Details of each concentration area are described at www.triiprograms.org/cbm/areas_of_concentration.html.

What is the nature of the PhD research?

- Students can perform purely computational or hybrid computational/experimental thesis projects.
- The students can choose to work with any of the program faculty in any of the areas of concentration (mentioned above).

What is the financial support package for CBM students?

- Full financial support is guaranteed to all CBM students. Specifically, all CBM students receive:
 - an annual stipend (2007 level: \$30,754),
 - a full tuition waiver for every year in the program,
 - a \$3,000 research supplement (which can be used for conference travel, computer expenses, etc.),
 - health insurance.
- Teaching assistantships are not required; i.e., funding is not contingent on performing a teaching assistantship.

Do you offer summer internships for undergraduate students?

- We do not have a formalized program, but we encourage you to contact us with your resume and your interests, and we will work to connect you with one of our ~40 program faculty for an exciting summer internship.

Where can I find more information?

- www.triiprograms.org/cbm
- email: cbm@triiprograms.org